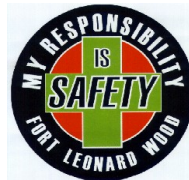




Fatality Alert 07-05

POV ACCIDENT PREVENTION



The 16 December 06 death of a Fort Leonard Wood NCO in a POV accident highlighted some of the key factors that leaders must focus on to help prevent POV accidents. Although not all of the factors discussed below were involved in the 16 December accident, leaders should be aware of all of these factors and should take actions to help protect their personnel from these hazards.

◆ **Local road network.** The local network of roads poses many hazards to drivers, especially those who are new to the area and not familiar with the roads. It is essential that new personnel be informed of these hazards soon after arrival and reminded frequently. The following are common to local secondary roads.

- **Sharp curves.** The only safe way to negotiate these curves is to slow down. Follow the recommended speed limits posted at the curves. Speed on sharp curves can be disastrous.

- **Low or "soft" road shoulders.** Drivers whose passenger side wheels leave the road, onto the shoulders, must know the safe way to pull the vehicle back onto the highway. Failure to do so can result in the vehicle being jerked across the center line or flipping, as the wheels catch on the edge of the road.

- **Poorly banked curves.** Because there are no signs to warn that a curve is banked the wrong direction, it is especially important that drivers slow down prior to entering unfamiliar curves.

- **Wildlife in the road.** Drivers must be aware that deer and other wild animals frequently cross or wander onto local secondary roads, posing a serious hazard to vehicles.

- **Farm vehicles.** On rural roads, drivers must be constantly alert to the possibility that a slow moving tractor or other vehicle could be just over the next hill or around the next curve.

- **Slick road surfaces.** It is not just ice that can cause roads to be slick. Road surfaces can have a thin film of oil, caused by vehicles that leak small amounts of oil. This oil, mixed with a little water from a light rain, can cause the road surface to be almost as slick as an icy surface. Wet leaves or mud in the road can also cause the road to be dangerously slick.

- **Unmarked intersections and unmarked no-passing lanes.** Although not as common, these hazards do still exist in the local area. Drivers must be aware and must take extra caution.

◆ **Vehicle hazards.** Not all vehicles are as safe to drive as others. Personnel must be reminded of the hazards of driving pickup trucks (tip over more easily, can fishtail more easily), smaller cars (less structural support in a crash), convertibles (less overhead support in a rollover), vehicles that are in poor condition or have worn tires, and motorcycles.

◆ **Recently redeployed drivers.** The installation has many personnel who have recently deployed to OIF and OEF where it is safest to drive fast and in the center of the road to avoid IEDs. That type of driving on curvy roads with oncoming traffic can turn deadly. It can be a difficult adjustment to leave those high-paced, highly-charged environments and drive more slowly here. But this is a